

The Brethren Evangelist

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The Brethren Publishing House,
ASHLAND, OHIO.E. L. YODER, } Associate Editors.
E. MASON. }

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ADDRESS,

THE BRETHREN PUB. HOUSE,
ASHLAND, Ashland Co., OHIO

ASHLAND, O., Nov. 30, 1887.

From Altamont, Cal.

The publishers are kindly requested not to change the headings to my correspondence. My last was headed the same as this when it left my hands; but when it appeared in the EVANGELIST, to my surprise and vexation, it read, "From the Editor," and was placed at the head of the editorial columns. No doubt, it was meant as a kindness and compliment; but as there was no explanation made, it placed me in an unfair light before the readers. I am grateful to God, and to my brethren in our late Ashland Convention for the confidence reposed in me in electing me as editor and publisher, but I was to enter upon my duties as such when the office and paper became the property of the church, and not before. It is true that the office editor proposed to me, when we parted, that they would put my name on as editor under the present ownership and management; but there was no arrangement made to this effect, and I do not think it would be prudent while I am over 2000 miles from the office. I have no objections to serving as editor for the present firm, provided I could be at the editor's table and do the editor's work; but to hold the position nominally, and be so far away from the duties and advantages of the editor's table, I think, would not be prudent. It is not necessary to state the reasons. With all the efforts that have been made to make an editor of me, I am still free, and so will I remain until the Brethren Publishing House becomes the property of the Brethren Church, or until I am employed by the owners and managers; and in either case there will be proper and timely notice given.

Now I should like to know what the committee appointed to purchase the Publishing House, etc., is doing or intends to do. I should like to know whether our committee will go on to raise the necessary funds to purchase, or whether it will allow its ardor to be cooled or drowned by the cold water that has been poured on the enterprise by our moderator. With all due respect to his superior age, experience and wisdom, I must dissent from his judgment in this case. When the circumstances are duly considered, the price is not unreasonable; and if a proper effort is made, there is nothing impracticable about it. I am sorry for his sake, and for the sake of our publishing interests, that he assumed the attitude he did toward the work, for it makes it more

difficult; and if it should fail, some of us, at least, would feel that the prime cause of the failure must be attributed to him. I do not want to judge his motives—I could not if I would—but allowing them to be pure as holiness itself, I doubt his prudence in the case in hand, and I hope the committee will inaugurate measures to carry out the wish of the convention, and, I may say, of the brotherhood. I do not want to engage in any controversy on this subject; I hope it will not be necessary; and so, with this allusion to the matter, I will let it rest, unless circumstances shall require further notice.

I am sorry that I have not had time to write more for our paper, and I am especially sorry that I have not been able to attend properly to my private correspondence. Since my return to the Pacific Coast, we have had the burdensome task of moving; and this, with our local work, has required all my time. Now, that we are pretty well along with our work, I will try to write a little more.

I have only time to say in conclusion, that we had our annual business meeting on last Saturday. On Saturday evening we had a communion service, and preaching on the next day after Sunday school and in the evening. Among the business attended to I may mention, that, by unanimous vote, we organized a Brethren Church at Altamont, Cal. Bro. C. E. Doty was ordained to the eldership and Bro. Wm. Shanks to the deaconship. We also elected two trustees,—C. E. Doty for three years, and Bro. C. Christensen for two years,—Bro. Shanks as Clerk and Mrs. W. R. Thomas as Treasurer. We are but a small body, numerically, but we have considerable courage and a good hope.

We live in the hill country 56 miles east of San Francisco on the Livermore branch of the Southern Pacific R. R., and between the Livermore and the great San Joaquin Valleys. Our station and post-office is Altamont. We ask an interest in the prayers of all God's children, and we extend a hearty invitation to our brethren and sisters to visit us.

J. W. BEER.

Nov. 14th, 1887.

About the Editor.

We hope it will not surprise nor vex our Editor this time if his article appears at the head of the editorial columns, without the heading changed.

Bro. Beer has reason to suppose that it was meant as a compliment in as much as I proposed to place his name at the head of the editorial columns at once, and in case the Brethren Church did not live up to its contract through its general convention, we would compensate him as the office could afford for writing he would do, under that official relation to the paper.

We expected to hear from him before this, and when he wrote the correspondence he refers to; but there was nothing then and in lieu of that we gave the correspondence the place of honor.

With the correspondence preceding his article, Bro. Beer made several propositions and we desire here to announce to the Brotherhood that Bro. Beer has been requested to come to

Ashland at his earliest convenience and take up the duties as editor of the EVANGELIST, believing that he will be ready to make himself useful wherever he can, to assist our struggling institutions and the Brethren Church.

It is the wish of the proprietors of this paper to put into operation the decisions of the late convention, and as the convention has chosen Bro. Beer as the editor and publisher of this paper, they have ventured to make effectual the wise part of that decision at least; namely, appointing him as editor; and they are ready to turn the property over to the purchasing committee whenever it is ready to discharge its work. Accordingly, we expect that when we again hear from Bro. Beer, we shall be permitted to float at the head of the editorial column,

J. W. BEER, EDITOR.

J. D. McFADEN, ASSISTANT ED.

E. L. Yoder. } Directors.
E. Mason. }
A. L. Garber. }

By the consent and appointment of the proprietors of the EVANGELIST, I was given the position that I desired and sought for, and I expect to hold it at least until some further change is made. I refer to the position that every one who has had any business with this office must be familiar with: namely, Manager of the Brethren Publishing House.

I did not act in the capacity of the Editor of the EVANGELIST, from choice or by appointment of the proprietors; but because it had to be done after some manner and I did it outside of my regular work. Some of the brethren who were not as familiar with the circumstances and as forbearing as they might have been, wrote me letters of kind censure because there was lack in that respect, but I could not remedy it under the circumstances. The letters so written I respect. But some condemned the paper, etc., because it did not suit them, without making any allowance for the difficulties in the way. Such I do not respect.

Some have sympathized with me and rendered such assistance as was within their power and apologized for the defects. To such I am very grateful, and while I do not seek to punish an enemy, I expect to reward my friends wherever there is an opportunity presented to do it.

As this is all the valedictory I expect to write, I desire here to say that I am under lasting obligations to Bro. Edward Mason. His name is more familiar to you than my own, yet many of his qualities are not. I do not hold him up as better than other men equally good, but he has been a true friend and Christian, and that, too, without promise or hope of reward. He has not attempted to dictate the policy of this paper while it was under my care editorially, nor to bulldoze me into doing anything that my judgment and conscience did not approve. He has been a faithful helper, and never forsook me under any circumstances from the commencement, and the same faithfulness he is still extending. Whatever may be the breakers upon the sea of life that may strike him and me, I will always remember with the deepest feeling of gratitude the devotion he has shown the EVANGELIST. He is

true to the core. God bless Bro. Mason.

Bro. E. L. Yoder, who was instrumental in getting me into this position has always respected my rights and treated me Christian and manly. Our association together has been cordial and we never differed much on any question except on how to whip the Conservatives.

And now as the convention saw proper to appoint these good brethren and myself as Directors of the EVANGELIST, I feel at home in the company, and believe the convention brought a good end out of an unwise thing.

After all, the result permits me to go right on in the sphere that I desired to labor in, and to make the Publishing House enterprise a success and power in the church, which is the height of my past and present ambition.

Since brother Yoder left the office, I have done the work of two men. I edited the two weekly papers, did the correspondence, book-keeping, carried the details of the business wholly in my mind, superintended a considerable job business, performed the duties of pressman and foreman in the office. But it is now too big to be thus held any longer in my own hands and as soon as Brother Beer is here, I will go to work to cultivate several fields which hitherto had to be left untouched because it was impossible to find time to do any more work.

I might as well say here that I feel competent to edit a paper like the EVANGELIST, and do it well if I have time; but such a life is a little too tame to suit my temperment and restless nature, and I find a great deal more satisfaction in performing the duties that belong to the business manager of a publishing house enterprise.

I am glad that steps can be taken to comply, in a degree, with the decision of the convention—so far at least as the general effect of the paper reaches. I shall also be glad to see the churches come forward and do the work that they advised their delegates to inaugurate. If we ever expect to succeed as a corporation we must regard our declarations and do, as far as the means can be obtained, the work prescribed by our general conventions. Unless this is done, our whole fabric of church machinery will fall to pieces and general chaos will be the grand finale.

The year 1888 is now near at hand, and under the Publishing House provisions, the pastors of the several churches are required to see that a thorough canvass for the EVANGELIST is made, or appoint some one to do it.

Old accounts with the Publishing House should be settled at once and all arrears paid up.

The convention report is now ready for delivery, and the greater part of the Brethren Annual is printed. The Report is 20 cts. per copy and the Annual 10 cts.

May 1888 open upon us as we are engaged in a united effort to extend the Brethren Cause, and build up her interests. May God help us.

A. L. GARBER.

Acquaintance with God.

Some one asks, "How do we become acquainted with God? How do we become acquainted with an earthly friend? We are

introduced to him, we exchange a few words—the acquaintance is begun. It is continued on every available occasion. We talk with him again and again, and finally the chance acquaintance ripens into friendship. If we are separated, we keep up the acquaintance by correspondence.

Thus we become acquainted with God. We talk to him and thus begin the friendship. We read about him, find out what he says. The friendship will grow just like any other friendship. "Just like any common friendship, then, religion is?" says some one. There is no such thing as a common friendship. Is not true friendship a beautiful thing? The friendship of man for man and woman for woman. Abraham was called the "friend of God." Enoch "walked with God." "Know thou the God of thy fathers," said David to Solomon. So this is no common friendship. It is the most beautiful thing on God's earth. To be Christ's friend is to be every thing that heart can desire. Some one asks, "Can you have it for the asking?" It! It is no "it," but "him." It is no experience, no frame of mind. We abide in him by keeping up correspondence with him by word, by work, by prayer, by meditation, through the church, and so on. Then we shall never die—we "have passed from death unto life." M.

"Infirmity" and "Sin."

We look out upon men and women and see one doing this wrong and another that, and we mark it down against them as "sin." How unmerciful we are sometimes in our condemnations, and how bitter in our accusations! But God, of purer and more discriminating eyes than we, sees the same action and marks it down "infirmities." We have no sympathy or compassion for a man's weakness, but cry out, "punish him, let him be led to judgment." God looks down with eyes full of love on the man's infirmity and says, "pity him, help him." There is a wide difference between an infirmity and a sin. The difference should be carefully noted. Sin is the deliberate choice of wrong. Sin is saying "No" to God's "yes." It is the resolve of the will to do contrary to God's will. An infirmity is a moral defect or weakness, and may not be necessarily a sin.

As the teacher looks over the copy-book, he sees the great disparity that exists between the copy line and the scrawling, scraggling lines below. Does he punish the boy and call him blockhead, dunce, etc.? Not if he is a sensible teacher—and some of them are. The true teacher is sympathetic with the boy's awkwardness. He endeavors by love and encouragement to get him to improve. God has given us a perfect law and a perfect copy. He sees how we fail to obey the one or imitate the other. He is able to see that our failure is often due to our infirmity. It is not because we plan and determine to do wrong, but because we are ignorant and weak. Knowing this, he tenderly pities and graciously helps. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." Do not forget the distinction between an infirmity and sin. M.